

Remarks

Claims 1-33 are pending. Claims 1-16 are allowed. Claims 17-21, 25, and 27-29 stand rejected, while claims 22-24, 26, and 30-33 stand objected to. Claim 17 is amended herein. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request allowance of claims 1-33.

Claims 22-24, 26, and 30-33 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowability.

Claims 17-21, 25, and 27-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,092,409 to Patten et al in view of U.S. Patent Publ. No U.S. 2006/0265148 to Stack et al and in view of Reider ("Model-based Interpretation and Realization of a Coriolis Mass Flow Meter Having a Straight Measuring Tube"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claim 17, as amended, requires determining a current flexural stiffness of a component of a flowmeter from a flow meter vibrational displacement produced in response to application of a predetermined force to one or more flow tubes of the flow meter. Claim 17 further requires comparing the initial flexural stiffness to the current flexural stiffness and detecting a calibration error condition responsive to comparing the initial flexural stiffness to the current flexural stiffness.

Independent claim 17 therefore is amended to be similar to allowed independent claim 1. None of Patten, Stack, or Reider disclose determining a flexural stiffness from a flow meter vibrational displacement produced in response to application of a predetermined force to one or more flow tubes of the flow meter.

Independent claim 17 therefore includes features that are neither taught nor suggested by Patten, Stack, and Reider. Dependent claims 18-21, 25, and 27-29 are allowable for the same reasons as claim 17.

Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 1-33. Please feel free to call to discuss the patentability of the pending claims.

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SIGNATURE OF PRACTITIONER

Gregg Jansen, Reg. No. 46,799
The Ollila Law Group LLC
Telephone: (303) 938-9999 ext. 14
Facsimile: (303) 938-9995

Correspondence address:

CUSTOMER NO. 32827